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|  | Manchester Alliance for Community Care |
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| Reducing Teenage ConceptionsA BriefingAugust 2010 |
| MACCSwan Buildings, 20, Swan Street, ManchesterM4 5JWTel: 0161 834 9823[www.macc.org.uk](http://www.macc.org.uk) |   |

**1. About this briefing**

This briefing is aimed at practitioners and managers within the voluntary and community sector who want to know more about work which is taking place in Manchester around teenage pregnancy and to start thinking through how their organisation may be well placed to contribute to reducing this issue.

It provides an overview of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy in Manchester; how Manchester PCT and statutory partners are tackling the issue at a strategic level; types of services voluntary and community sector organisations are well placed to deliver; useful resources and links to further information.

For more information about this briefing and the voluntary and community sector [Child and Family Support Forum](http://www.macc.org.uk/macc/child_families.php) please contact:

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**2. Overview**

Despite the best efforts of local organisations over recent times to work with young people to help them to put off parenthood until later in life, Manchester continues to have one of the highest under-18 conception rates in England. The former government launched the national teenage pregnancy strategy in 1999, which set two targets to be achieved by the end of 2010:

* To reduce the under 18 conception rate by 50%
* To increase the proportion of teenage mothers in education, training and employment to 60%

Manchester is not on track to achieve the under-18 conception rate reduction target. The rate increased between 1998 and 2008, up from 61.3 per 1000 to 69.8 per 1000. However, the number of teenage conceptions fell over the same period, down from 540 in 1998 to 523 in 2008. The most significant trend over the last decade has been a reduction in the proportion of teenage conceptions resulting in birth, down from 72% of all teenage conceptions in 1998 to 51% in 2008.

Around two thirds of local wards (based on pre-2001 boundaries) are classified as teenage conception hotspots; these are wards with rates of over 60 conceptions per 1,000 young women aged 15-17. A small number have rates in excess of 100 per 1,000.

Having a child at an early age can damage young people's health and well-being and limit their education and economic prospects. While individual young people can be competent and loving parents, all the evidence suggests that teenage parents and their children experience a range of negative outcomes in childhood and later life. Measures to reduce the number of teenage conceptions – those that provide young people with the means and the motivation to put off parenthood until later life – will have an impact, but a dramatic reduction will not be achieved without addressing the wider determinants of social exclusion and health inequalities.

**3. Manchester’s strategic approach**

The need to improve teenage conceptions has been a common theme in national strategies such as Every Child Matters (2004), Choosing Health (2005), Teenage Pregnancy: Next Steps (2006) and Teenage Parents: Next Steps (2007). The current coalition government has signalled that local areas that have identified teenage pregnancy as an issue should continue to work on this agenda.

Reducing the number of teenage conceptions is a strategic priority for the council and for NHS Manchester. The under-18 conception rate reduction target has been included in the current Local Area Agreement (LAA) and has been included in the Children and Young People’s Plan and the NHS Manchester Sexual Health Commissioning Strategy 2010 – 2013.

The Manchester Teenage Pregnancy Partnership is responsible for leading on teenage pregnancy prevention and support programmes. The Teenage Pregnancy Team is based in the Joint Health Unit. The Board is chaired by the Chief Executive of NHS Manchester. The Partnership focuses on the following priority areas:

* improving access to contraception, sexual health and abortion services;
* improving sex and relationships education in formal and informal settings;
* improving general and targeted prevention;
* improving support for pregnant teenagers and teenage parents.

**4. How can VCS organisations contribute to reducing teenage conceptions?**

There are many ways in which VCS organisations can support work to reduce Manchester’s teenage pregnancy rate, contribute to improving young people’s sexual health and offer support to pregnant teenagers and teenage parents.

Prevention:

* Have up to date information about under 18 conception rates and key issues regarding young people’s sexual health across the city
* Consider citywide data and priorities in relation to the knowledge that VCS organisations have of local areas and specific target groups
* Ensure that staff access relevant workforce development opportunities
* Have accurate information about local sexual health services available to young people
* Know how to refer young people to specialist services eg Fresh clinics and Brook.
* Include Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) in programmes of work with young people which provide them with opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding about relationships and sexual health, including contraception and STIs, and the skills and confidence to negotiate safer sex experiences
* Be aware of specialist workers who can advise on and support the delivery of SRE programmes
* Improve access to condoms by registering with the C-card scheme
* Improve access to Chlamydia screening by registering as a screening site
* Provide opportunities for parents and carers to develop the knowledge and confidence to be able to discuss sex, relationships and sexual health with their children
* Encourage staff to undertake Speakeasy training to deliver courses to parents and carers of young people

Support to Pregnant Teenagers and Teenage Parents:

* Have accurate information about appropriate local services which support young women who may be pregnant, particularly those who require advice about the options open to them
* Know how to refer to young people to appropriate health professionals and other specialist workers
* Deliver programmes of work that support local targets to reduce smoking in pregnancy, improve maternal health and nutrition and increase rates of breastfeeding
* Deliver activities to support teenage mothers and fathers, young families and their children
* Deliver activities to support teenage parents to re-enter or remain in Education, Employment or Training (EET)

**5. Opportunities for the voluntary and community sector**

Manchester Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board, chaired by Laura Roberts, Chief Executive of [Manchester PCT](http://www.manchesterpct.nhs.uk/), with senior level representation from local partner organisations, is leading the development and implementation of the local teenage pregnancy prevention and support programme. The VCS participant on the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board is John Hartshorn (Young People’s Support Foundation).

The Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Team offer support to organizations and workers who wish to develop their work on this issue, providing current data, recommending resources, and facilitating links and/or contact with specialist services.

Informing them of work you are doing in this area helps in the co-ordination of work across the city and in the identification of good practice.

The team maintain a website with up to date information about sexual health services in Manchester [www.anyplanstonight.co.uk](http://www.anyplanstonight.co.uk), produce publicity leaflets and posters and both support and offer opportunities for young people’s engagement.

**6. Specialist local voluntary and community sector organisations**

A number of VCS organisations are engaged in work on this issue, they have knowledge of effective practice, educational resources and local services.

YPSF

YPSF has workers with a specific remit to work with young people on sexual health issues.

[Brook](http://www.brook.org.uk)

**Brook is a free and confidential contraception and sexual health clinic for young people aged 19 and under, including under 16s**

For information about other organisations delivering work around teenage conceptions go to [www.onecentralplace.org.uk](http://www.onecentralplace.org.uk) – an online directory of voluntary and community sector organisations in Manchester.

**7. Useful Documents**

[Teenage Pregnancy, Polices and Strategies](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/10020/policies_and_plans/1456/manchester_joint_health_unit_policies_and_strategies/4) (Manchester Joint Health Unit)

[Manchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), 2008](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=2829&fileID=8459)

NHS Manchester Sexual Health Commissioning Strategy 2010 – 2013 (draft)

[Improving Health in Manchester: NHS Commissioning Strategic Plan 2009-2014](http://www.manchester.nhs.uk/document_uploads/Commissioning/NHS%20Manchester%20Commissioning%20Plan%20111108_7bcd6.pdf)

[A Picture of Progress: Compendium of Statistics for Manchester](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/file/11460/a_picture_of_progress_compendium_compendium_of_statistics_for_manchester)

[Manchester Public Health Annual Report](http://www.manchester.nhs.uk/document_uploads/Board%207%20April%202010/Manchester%20Public%20Health%20Annual%20Report%202009%20%282%29.pdf)

[Manchester Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan 2009-2012 DRAFT consultation version (2010) Manchester City council](https://cms.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/file/11880/final_consultation_draft_of_the_children_and_young_peoples_plan_200912)

[A Picture of Progress: Compendium of Statistics for Manchester](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/file/11460/a_picture_of_progress_compendium_compendium_of_statistics_for_manchester)

**8. Useful Links**

[Manchester Alliance for Community Care](http://www.macc.org.uk/macc/food.php)

[NHS Manchester website](http://www.manchester.nhs.uk/default.aspx)

[Manchester Public Health Development Service](http://www.manchesterpublichealthdevelopment.org/)

[www.anyplanstonight.co.uk](http://www.anyplanstonight.co.uk)

[FRESH](http://www.fresh4manchester.com/)

[Palatine Contraception and Sexual Health Clinics](http://www.anyplanstonight.co.uk/web/content/view/43/57/)

**9. For more information**

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